

In the Specification

Please amend the above-identified Specification as follows:

In the Title:

Please delete "THYMOCYTE CASPASE ACTIVITY AND NEGATIVE SELECTION" and insert therefor --METHODS OF IDENTIFYING AGENTS WHICH ENHANCE CASPASE ACTIVITY--.

In the Abstract:

Please delete the Abstract and insert therefor --Methods for identifying agents which enhance the activity of a caspase according to the invention are described, as well as methods for enhancing caspase activity and methods for enhancing apoptosis in a lymphocyte.--

In the Claims:

Please cancel Claim 43.

Please amend Claims 41 and 45 as follows:

- 1 <sup>41</sup>. (Amended) A method of identifying an agent which enhances a caspase or procaspase expressed in immature thymocytes, or an active derivative or fragment thereof, wherein said caspase is necessary for apoptosis [the caspase according to Claim 1], comprising the steps of:
- (a) contacting <sup>(purified)</sup> the caspase, or an active derivative or fragment thereof, with a caspase substrate in the presence of the agent; and
- (b) identifying enhancement of caspase activity.

- 2 <sup>45</sup>. (Amended) A method of enhancing a caspase or procaspase expressed in immature thymocytes, or an active derivative or fragment thereof, wherein said caspase is necessary for apoptosis [the caspase according to Claim 1], comprising contacting said caspase with an agent that enhances the activity of the caspase.